

March 9, 2015

Members of the Finance, Revenue, and Bond Committee:

I serve as a Credit Representative at Farm Credit East, ACA after graduating from Cornell University in 2014, and this is my testimony for Public Hearing on **S.B. 946 an act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget**. The Farm Credit system is a financial institution that was established in 1916 as an agriculture lending cooperative to support farmers through the extension of credit, financial service, business consulting, and more. Although I was not raised on a farm, I have the opportunity to serve the hardest working group of individuals who rely on programs such as the Agricultural Sustainability Account, CT Farmlink, Farm Transition Grant programs, and many of the other programs on the table. My customers rely on these network and financial support programs to either make improvements on his or her operation, become more established as a young farmer, or to receive additional support beyond what an organization like Farm Credit offer.

As an individual who works for a lending institution that provides to farmers, I can speak first hand to the economic impact that will occur with the disappearance of these programs. Unfortunately, there are many young farmers that I cannot extend a line of credit to, but I often refer them to programs and networks such as these. I urge you to not only recognize the economic backslide that will occur here, but to also listen to the small business owners who produce a product you probably consumed today.

I appreciate your hard work, and I also thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and listen to others.

Sincerely,

Emilie Strand  
Credit Representative  
Farm Credit East, ACA.